

## EADRCC Executive Summary

### REGARDING

### **FOREST FIRES IN ALBANIA, BULGARIA AND THE FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA<sup>1</sup>**

26 July 2007 10:00 UTC

#### ALBANIA

- Approximately 100 fires started burning in the week 18 – 23 July, affecting approximately 1,500 hectares of forest near the city Kukws in northern Albania (National Park of Valbone, near the border to Kosovo (forest of Germenj) and near the Greek border.
- Albania has an urgent need for air intervention, because the use of standard fire fighting equipment is ineffective, since the disaster area is mountainous. Albania sent a request for international disaster assistance on 23 July at 17:00 UTC.
- All available resources, local and national, were activated to cope with the disaster situation – approximately 1,300 military personnel with 50 vehicles as well as an undetermined number of local personnel are being employed.
- Germany, through a private company, offered 1 helicopter with flexible water bucket. Albania accepted the offer and is negotiating with the company.
- The situation throughout Albania continues to be very serious, since new fires have started and the existing ones continue to burn. There is still lack of, at least, two firefighting helicopters with buckets.

#### BULGARIA

- Approximately 300 fires have been burning during the last week, affecting approximately 1.000.000 hectare. The largest fire near Stara Zagora city is in a mountainous region of 300.000 hectare where the use of standard fire fighting equipment is ineffective.
- On 20 July at 20:00 UTC, Bulgaria appealed for international assistance and requested 4 firefighting helicopters with buckets and 2 firefighting airplanes.
- The fire fighting efforts involve all available resources from local and national fire services, Civil Protection and the Ministry of Defence. Also private helicopters take part in the fire fighting efforts.
- The Russian Federation, on a bilateral basis, provided one IL-76 fire fighting airplane, arriving on 21 July. The airplane performed 18 fire-fighting flights, dropping 756 tons of water. On 24 July, the aircraft completed its mission in Bulgaria and was relocated to another theatre.
- The Republic of Turkey, on 21 July, offered a fire-fighting helicopter, which has been accepted by Bulgaria on 25 July. However, in the meantime the helicopter has been already been sent to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup>. Turkey's

---

<sup>1</sup> Turkey recognizes the Republic of Macedonia with its constitutional name

Emergency Management General Directorate is now investigating the possibility to send another helicopter to Bulgaria.

#### THE FORMER YUGOSLAV OF MACEDONIA<sup>1</sup>

- The country is fighting numerous fires affecting 3.000 hectares of forest in 32 municipalities. The fires were endangering vital infrastructures and towns. The Government of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup>, on 18 July, declared a national crisis situation. The situation is reported as critical with 22 active fires burning out of control and new ones breaking out.
- On 23 July at 23:24 UTC, the EADRCC received a disaster assistance request from the former Yugoslav Republic of MACEDONIA<sup>1</sup> asking for aerial fire-fighting capacities.
- On 24 July, Croatia, on a bilateral basis, sent one Canadair fire-fighting. The aircraft will be staying in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia<sup>1</sup> until the fire threat will be removed or Croatia itself will need the plane on it's own territory.
- On the same day, Slovenia deployed one fire-fighting helicopter He 412-B. The assistance is provided on a bilateral basis.
- On 25 July, one fire-fighting airplane and one fire-fighting helicopter from the Republic of Turkey joined the fire-fighting operation in the stricken area.
- On 26 July, Austria offered 2 national experts from the Austrian fire brigades, the assistance was accepted by Macedonia.
- At present 5 fire-fighting airplanes and 4 helicopters (national capacities included) are deployed to cope with fires.